

MAINLINE GRAPHICS TRAINS ALL THEIR EMPLOYEES IN LEAN MANUFACTURING TO INCREASE EFFICIENCIES

ABOUT MAINLINE GRAPHICS. Mainline Graphics began with just 2 people making signs in the late 1970's. Fast forward to 2010. That was when Kerri Mobile, CEO, and Scott Jobe, President, took over the business and evolved it into a leading national provider of custom made residential sign systems. When Kerri and Scott took over they had 9 employees but they grew quickly. By 2014 they had moved into a 45,000 square foot facility in Antrim, New Hampshire, and now employ 27.

THE CHALLENGE. With a new facility, new processes, and new equipment, Kerri knew they would need help with efficiencies and where to place the new equipment. "We tried to be proactive with all the changes going on," said Mobile. "So in mid-2016 we brought in NH MEP to implement Lean training. We wanted everyone in the company to be of the same mind-set, learn how to reduce waste, and understand the benefits of continuous improvement."

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. The ultimate goal of the Lean training was to provide hands-on experience with Lean Methodologies for all Mainline Graphics employees. NH MEP provided training and coaching in the areas of Principles of Lean Manufacturing, Value Stream Mapping, and Kaizen Events. The Principles of Lean Manufacturing training workshop was a hands-on training session that walked Mainline Graphics employees through Lean concepts with four separate factory simulations. The workshop focused on eliminating waste in an organization by directly applying Lean tools. Next was the Value Stream Mapping. This consisted of training, coaching, and implementation in which the employees mapped the material and information flow for a production process or product family. NH MEP began with training sessions on the techniques and a simple case study in order to teach the concepts of Value Stream Mapping. The employees created a "Current State" map for a product family or process starting with the customer's order, receiving raw material and conclude with the finished product at shipping. Last were the Kaizen Events. These were a series of multi-day training and implementation activities identified during the Value Stream Mapping event. These Kaizen Events were focused on eliminating the wastes identified on the Current State map that are necessary to execute the transformation from Current State to Desired or Future State.

"As with many things that are new or different, the initial response was painfully slow or even met with some resistance. The evolution of our production shop has been striking since completing the NH MEP Lean Methodologies Training. We now have a lot more collaboration and critical thinking on the floor to streamline methods and processes which has resulted in fewer mistakes and better products. We are still on a ramp up for innovation and improvement and you can see how our crew is now embracing the ownership and challenge of continuous improvements."

-Scott Jobe, President

RESULTS



\$500,000 in new or retained sales



2 new or retained jobs



\$20,000 in training



\$15,000 in new products



\$270,000 in new investment

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